

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - October 7, 2005

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced today that a federal grand jury sitting in San Diego handed up an eight-count indictment charging Alven Armando Diaz, Robin Cheri McMasters, Arnulfo Campas-Cuadras, Alma Ramos-Gutierrez, Karely Diaz-Hernandez, and Armando Ayala Diaz with drug-trafficking and money-laundering offenses.

According to the indictment, Diaz and his associates were involved in the importation from Mexico, and subsequent distribution in San Diego, of multi-pound quantities of methamphetamine, a Schedule II Controlled Substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1). According to court documents, on September 26, 2005, Alven Armando Diaz, his father, Armando Ayala Diaz, and Robin Cheri McMasters were arrested during a suspected drug transaction. Subsequent searches resulted in the seizure of four pounds of methamphetamine, along with other drug paraphernalia, several guns and approximately \$26,000 in cash. Karely Hernandez-Diaz, defendant Alven Armando Diaz's sister, was arrested on October 4, 2005, and Arnulfo Campas-Cuadras and Alma Ramos-Gutierrez had previously been arrested on other charges.

The charges arise from a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Administration Narcotics Task Force (NTF), focused on the drug-trafficking activities of Alven Armando Diaz, Isaias Perez-Castrejon and Lawrence Ponce Degracia. Degracia, Perez, and eleven other defendants were indicted in two related cases on September 20, 2005 (Case Numbers 05CR1627 and 05CR1628). Between the three indictments to date, the investigation has netted over 29 pounds of methamphetamine, 55 pounds of cocaine, 1,000 pounds of marijuana, and over \$1,000,000.

The defendants are expected to be arraigned on the indictment on Tuesday, October 11, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 05 CR 1807-IEG

ALVEN ARMANDO DIAZ
ARNULFO CAMPAS-CUADRAS
KARELY DIAZ-HERNANDEZ

ROBIN CHERI McMASTERS
ALMA RAMOS-GUTIERREZ
ARMANDO AYALA DIAZ

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, U.S.C., Secs. 846 and 841(a)(1) - Conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine

Title 21, U.S.C. Sec. 841(a)(1) - Distribution of Methamphetamine

Title 21, U.S.C. Sec. 841(a)(1) - Possession of Methamphetamine with Intent to Distribute

Title 21, U.S.C. Sec. 952, 960 - Importation of Methamphetamine

Maximum penalty: Life in prison; ten year mandatory minimum sentence, 5 years of supervised release, and a \$4,000,000 fine

Title 18, U.S.C. Secs. 1956(h), 1956(a)(1)(A)(i), and 1956(a)(1)(B)(i) - Conspiracy to launder money

Maximum penalty: 20 years in custody, 3 years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine

Title 18, U.S.C. Sec. 2 - Aiding and Abetting

Title 21, U.S.C. Sec. 853; Title 18, U.S.C. Sec. 982 - Criminal Forfeiture

AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Internal Revenue Service
Murrieta Police Department

Drug Enforcement Administration, Narcotics Task Force
San Diego Police Department
United States Postal Service

An indictment is not evidence that the defendants committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.